

Nussbaum Center's Commercial Kitchen, Phase One of Future Greensboro, NC Health Hub, Tees Up for Construction

Part of an initiative to create a Health Hub for a community that's situated in a "food desert" and Opportunity Zone.

GREENSBORO, NC, UNITED STATES,
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EINPresswire.com/ -- Nussbaum Center for Entrepreneurship (NCFE) has

selected Hodgins Construction as the General Contractor for its commercial kitchen project and anticipates that construction will begin in the first quarter of 2024, pending permit approval. The organization is also in discussions with local health providers about creating an educational outreach initiative designed to improve overall community health.

“

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Sam Funchess, NCFE CEO.

This effort is a part of NCFE's pilot project, Creating Equitable Food Spaces, an initiative to create a Health Hub for a community that's situated in a "food desert" and Opportunity Zone. One of its aims is to address the community's lack of local, healthy and affordable food products and food-related employment. Another is to address equity in the community's food industry by helping women, minorities and refugees who are

disadvantaged, unemployed or underemployed develop the skills and access the tools that move them toward economic self-sufficiency.

“Local businesses supplying fresh, healthy food to our nearby residential communities are practically nonexistent,” said Lisa Hazlett, NCFE President. “And the community is paying for that with their health. In our Census tract, the rate of diabetes is 30% higher than the rest of Guilford County. We need to address health inequity, and we need to take a holistic approach to do it successfully.”

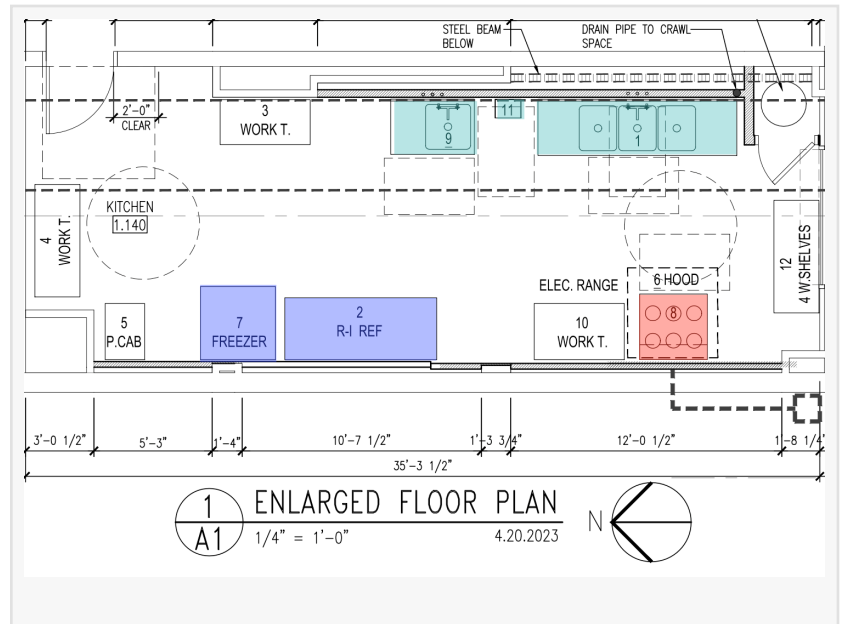
According to a study published by the National Institute of Health, decades of research has



**the NUSSBAUM CENTER
FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP**
GREENSBORO'S SMALL BUSINESS INCUBATOR

demonstrated that diabetes affects racial and ethnic minorities and low-income adult populations in the US disproportionately.

The commercial kitchen project is the beginning of this effort. An area of NCFE's building will be converted into a commercial kitchen and once complete will be available to food industry entrepreneurs for hourly rental. There will also be on-site business planning and development classes, plus financing assistance.



The next phase will be the buildout of a 40,000-square-foot food manufacturing and production facility in The Steelhouse, NCFE's major redevelopment project that will revitalize the massive historic Carolina Steel structure. It will include space for a year-round indoor farmers market, which will serve the dual purpose of a climate-controlled walking track during non-market hours.

Preliminary plans for the Health Hub also include a medical office on site and community educational outreach in diet, nutrition and fitness.

"We want to create a healthy environment that provides equitable opportunities and improves health outcomes for community residents and small business owners alike," said Sam Funchess, NCFE CEO. "If we address the critical needs for fresh food, exercise, medical access, and food industry entrepreneurship support, we can help our neighbors in a meaningful way."

NCFE's planned commercial kitchen is being supported by funding from the Stanley and Dorothy Frank Family Foundation, Wells Fargo, First National Bank, Pinnacle Financial Partners, The Crescent Rotary Club Foundation, Cone Health Foundation and NC Business Incubator Association. Additional funds are being pursued to cover costs associated with higher than normal construction estimates.

About the Nussbaum Center

The Nussbaum Center for Entrepreneurship is a 501(c)3 non-profit and has been a magnet and a supportive partner for entrepreneurs, assisting with services every young business needs to succeed and grow.

The Steelhouse, adjacent to the existing NCFE small business incubator, is a major redevelopment project that will revitalize the massive historic Carolina Steel structure and create an estimated 600 jobs. The project will convert the existing raw space into flexible, scalable

spaces that meet the needs of manufacturing entrepreneurs, food producers and the neighboring community. For more information: <https://nussbaumcfe.com/>.

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